

Frequently Asked Questions

Q - What is the PennBid™ Program and how will my agency benefit?

A – The **PennBid™ Program** was designed through the collaborative efforts of 24 municipal agencies and Authorities to streamline and significantly reduce the cost of procurement and bid solicitations. **PennBid™** is a secure internet based system for managing many aspects of the bid procurement process. Specifically, document distribution, notification and communications with vendors / bidders, addenda management, receipt and tabulation of the bids and awarding of contracts.

Q - Is electronic bidding and bid management allowed for Pa local governments?

A - Yes – Act 88 of 2006 amended local government procurement provisions by unanimous vote. (245-0) Details are outlined in *Pa Legislator's Municipal Deskbook*.

Q – Does each agency manage their own bid proposals?

A – Absolutely. Each agency is given unique pass-code protected access to set-up and manage their solicitations individually.

Q – Can all departments within our Agency use PennBid™?

A – Yes – **PennBid™** can be used for any request-for-quotation or request-for-proposal, regardless of department. The same system can be used by Public Works, Engineering, Public Safety, Authorities, Admin., and School Systems

Q – What types of proposals can be competitively bid using the PennBid™ Program?

A1 – **PennBid™** can be used for any solicitation and request-for-proposals, ranging from multi-prime construction project and equipment rental to office supplies and professional services.

A2 – All forms of online bids are supported by **PennBid™**; Q&A, Lump Sum, Line Item, and combination.

Q – Does PennBid eliminate the need for public advertising?

A – No. Agencies must still publically advertise some bids, however, using **PennBid™** allows the print ads to be much smaller, reducing newsprint costs by 50-75%.

Q – What is the expected savings using PennBid™?

A – Overall time and cost is reduced by 80% compared to paper solicitations. Typically agencies save around 3-6% of total bid value.

Q – Can our engineering firm be included in the PennBid™ Program?

A – Yes - Engineering firms are provided full access for procurement management and bidding of Agency projects, again, at no cost.



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Frequently Asked Questions

Q – What does PennBid™ Cost?

A – PennBid™ is provided at **absolutely no cost** to public agencies, private firms, and vendors. Vendors who are awarded contracts are assessed a modest, capped fee of 1/4%.

Q – How does PennBid™ help with communication?

A 1 – Regardless of the number of bidders for a solicitation, communication with all is just a mouse click. **PennBid™** sends individual emails directly from you to them. This is very helpful in communicating and verifying addenda. No more looking up names, verifying email addresses and fax numbers, or calling to verify addenda receipt.

A2 – Responding to questions from bidders is very strait forward. You respond one time and both the question and answer is automatically sent to all bidders. All Q&As stay with the solicitation and can be viewed at any time. This is especially helpful for a late bidder.

Q – Do we need to make IT changes?

A – No – PennBid™ is a “hosted service”. No changes or additions are needed for either the local agency or bidding community. All that is needed is a connection to the internet.

Q – What do vendors / bidders think of electronic bidding?

A – The bidding community is very supportive as there are many benefits from their perspective. The ability to have access to all documents without wasting time driving, being automatically notified of all bidding opportunities that match their products and services, timely addenda receipt sent to both email and fax, and being able to update bids multiple times, are all valuable, resulting in better pricing for the agency.

Q - Can events such as a pre-bid meeting be scheduled using PennBid?

A - Yes – Pre-bid meetings, site walk downs, and any other event or meeting can be schedule in a matter of seconds using PennBid.

Q - How long does it take to post a solicitation for proposal or bid?

A - From start to finish, a full solicitation for proposal or bid can be posted in 15—30 minutes.

Q - What documents are available to the bidders?

A - All posted Bid Documents, such as specifications, bid forms, pre-qualifications, and plans are available to the vendors, contractors, and subs.



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Q - Can bidders provide documents to others?

A - Yes – bidders can download documents, send them to subcontractors and suppliers, and print out what is wanted.

Q - Can bidders be screened based on qualifications?

A - Yes – Agencies establish their own expectations and qualifications for bidders, exactly as they have in the past.

Q - Can I select who they want to bid on my solicitation?

A - Yes – Agencies can select a “private” bid and invite specific bidders

Q - If PennBid is used for a private bid, can other bidders see the solicitation?

A - No – Only invited bidders have access to these solicitations.

Q - Must I monitor PennBid to receive questions from bidders?

A - No – When a bidder asks a question, the solicitation manager receives an email containing the question.

Q - How are questions communicated with bidders?

A - Two ways – Every question and answer is emailed directly to every bidder (with just two mouse clicks) and all Q&As are maintained within PennBid and available to bidders.

Q - How is addenda managed?

A - Addenda messages and attachments can be sent to every bidder with just a few mouse clicks.

Q - How is addenda acknowledged and tracked?

A - PennBid date and time stamps when the bidder downloads addenda and all other documents.

Q - When are bid results displayed?

A - The Agency manager determines when and what information is displayed about the solicitation and award.

Q - Can awards be divided between multiple vendors?

A - Yes – Line item and lump sum bids can be awarded among multiple vendors.



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